

Fiscal Highlights

Division of Juvenile Justice Services Proposes \$11million Multi-use Facility - Zackery N. King

The Board of Juvenile Justice Services most recently met on Thursday, May 30, 2013. Among other agenda items, Director of the Division of Juvenile Justice Services (DJJS), Susan Burke, presented the floor plan and some brief detail about a proposed \$11 million multi-use DJJS facility in Weber County to replace the current assortment of buildings currently in use there. Building specifications of the proposed multi-use facility are provided below. Key questions and insights from the Board of Juvenile Justice Services are outlined in the ensuing information as well; budget implications for the Legislature to be aware of are included throughout these sections and summarized in the conclusion.

Consolidation of buildings and Services

The proposed building would consolidate multiple buildings and services into one. Current buildings and operations that would be consolidated into the multi-use facility include (Each of these items is currently housed in its own building):

- Weber Valley Detention Center (WVDC)
- Davis Area Youth Center
- Receiving Center
- Observation and Assessment
- Case Management
- Transition Services

Building Specifications

The proposed facility would be located on six acres of land adjacent to the Weber County Jail (proposed sale of the land to the state of \$1) and would be approximately 42,000 square feet. The proposed cost of constructing the building is \$11 million and is based off of the current multi-use building in Cedar City.

The proposed facility would include:

- Receiving center and intake services
- 48 detention beds
- 16 observation and assessment beds
- Diversion services
- Community outreach
- On-site educational programs
- Case management and transition services.

Questions and Concerns During the Board Meeting

1. Observation and assessment beds/services should not be housed in the same facility as detention and secure beds/services. The current DJJS model is to employ multiple buildings across the state to keep youth closer to home, and to avoid mixing youth with more severe chronic cases and those of less severity and/or frequency. The proposed building does not accomplish this but carries out the opposite.

2. The location of a juvenile detention center adjacent to the county jail creates a negative community perception; a negative stigma of the detention center is associated with the facilities and with the youth placed there.

3. What is the cost comparison of current operations to proposed operations? For example, the proposed facility would increase detention bed capacity from 34 beds to 48. The current WVDC is operating at 16 beds due to previous years declining demand for those beds. The state would be building a facility where 33% of the detention capacity would be used. What is the reason for a proposed increase in bed capacity?

Additionally, DJJS has requested ongoing funding for the WVDC for the last five years, receiving reduced one-time funding appropriations each year. The WVDC's FY 2014 appropriations total \$1.7 million and break down as follows:

- Ongoing General Fund - \$435,000
- One-time reallocation from the Department of Corrections - \$1.2 million
- Other one-time funds - \$25,000

These funding issues are significant, because the cost of running the current WVDC would be consolidated into the cost of the multi-use facility. What is the cost of providing these services in the multi-use facility? Is there a clear way to determine the share of the costs of a larger detention facility? Does it exceed the current costs at WVDC?

4. What is the county's long-term monetary contributions to operations and maintenance of the facility going to be?

Conclusion

The proposed multi-use facility in Weber County has several significant budgetary implications for the Legislature to consider during the 2014 General Session, such as:

1. Funding issues associated with the current detention center in Weber County.
2. It increases detention bed space in Weber County from 34 to 48 beds; the current detention center operates 16 beds due to the aforementioned funding issues.
3. Discussions for long-term operations and maintenance of the building have not taken place; funding issues with the current operations in Weber County raise concerns about the long-term (possibly increased) cost to the state for the proposed building.
4. During the 2013 General Session, the Legislature expressed its intent through S.B. 218 for DJJS to obtain local, federal, and private funding for certain services and operations within the division; the proposed building has a direct impact on these respective services and operations in Weber County. In effect, consolidating them into the total cost of the proposed building and not addressing the intent of the Legislature for them.